

**From:** Craig Ringer  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 11/17/01 7:45pm  
**Subject:** One "vote" for harsher punishment

Hi

I'm the IT Manager of a small/medium business in Western Australia, the POST Newspapers (<http://www.postnewspapers.com.au>).

As an Australian citizen, I can't claim to have a direct say in this matter. However, I must express my concern for the current settlement, given that legislation made in the US about IT has the depressing habit of filtering through to Australia - and also, the US is the only place where MS can be practically restrained.

While I can't claim to be well educated in the details of the MS v DOJ proceedings, I must express my concern about the potential for loopholes, etc, in the current settlement. As has been stated in some media, the settlement was reached more out of lawyer exaustion than any real breakthrough. MS wore them down.

The settlement also strikes me as a slap on the wrist - it doesn't do much about the privacy concerns about MS, for example (though it may be outside the scope of the settlement to deal with these), all the hooks to MSN and other MS services, etc. Users can change these, but MS is unlikely to have the OS installer ask them to pick from a list of option for, say, seach site or web browser. They will set themselves as the default, and perhaps 5% of users will ever change it.

As for OEM rights - that is a step in the right direction and I applaud the settlement's handling of that part.

Overall, I'm a proponent of the "harsher penalties for CRIMINAL COMPANIES," plus restrictions such as requiring them to ship both their product and the competing products in "middleware" applications like web browsers and eMail clients. So if they can't remove IE from windows, all well and good - integration has its advantages. But they can make the hooks available to Mozilla.org, they can implement an alternative and have it ship with windows as a user-selectable alternative. Even better, have the windows installer ask the user what mail program, etc, they want to use!

MS couldn't provide support of course - but they don't provide useful end-user support anyway.

So classify me under "tougher restrictions and penalties"... and thanks for taking the time to read this.

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